

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (Currently amended):           An authenticating system for determining the authenticity of a product, said system comprising:

an authenticating agency storing an authentication code, the authenticating agency having a database with a plurality of authentication codes matched to a plurality of identification numbers, at least one identification number associated with the product;

a product having an authentication tag, said tag having a one-time use product code; and means for communicating by a consumer purchasing said product to said authenticating agency;

whereby the consumer communicates the product code to said authenticating agency, said authenticating agency determining if the product code matches the authentication code to indicate the authenticity of said product, and wherein each authentication code may only be utilized once for authenticating said product.

Claim 2 (Original):    The authenticating system of claim 1 wherein the authentication tag includes an identification number for the product associated with the authentication code;

whereby the consumer communicates both the identification number and the product code to said authenticating agency, said authenticating agency using the identification number to match the product code with the authentication code for the product.

Claim 3 (Original): The authenticating system of claim 1 wherein the authentication tag includes a removable strip concealing the product code;

whereby the consumer removes the removable strip to reveal the product code.

Claim 4 (Canceled)

Claim 5 (Canceled)

Claim 6 (Original): The authenticating system of claim 1 wherein said authenticating agency provides a response indicator to the consumer to indicate if said product is authentic.

Claim 7 (Currently amended): A method of determining an authenticity of a product, said method comprising the steps of:

programming an authenticating agency with a valid one-time use authenticating code;

affixing an authentication tag to a product, the authentication tag having a product code;

purchasing, by a consumer, the product;

providing the product code to the authenticating agency;

determining, by the authenticating agency, if the product code matches the authenticating code; and

providing the consumer a result of a match of the product code with the authenticating code;

and

deleting the authenticating code from the authenticating agency.

Claim 8 (Original): The method of determining an authenticity of a product of claim 7 wherein the authentication tag includes an identification number used in associating the product with the authentication code.

Claim 9 (Original): The method of determining an authenticity of a product of claim 8 wherein:  
the product code is hidden prior to purchase; and  
further comprising, before the step of providing the product code to the authenticating agency, the step of revealing the product code by the consumer.

Claim 10 (Original): The method of determining an authenticity of a product of claim 9 wherein the product code is hidden by positioning a removable strip over the product code.

Claim 11 (Currently amended): An authenticating system for determining the authenticity of a product, said system comprising:

an authenticating agency storing ~~an~~ a one-time use authentication code;  
a product having an authentication tag, said tag having a product code and an identification number for identifying the product; and  
means for communicating by a consumer purchasing said product to said authenticating agency;

whereby the consumer communicates both the identification number and the product code to said authenticating agency, said authenticating agency using the identification number to identify the authentication code and determining if the product code matches the authentication code for the product, said authenticating agency providing a result of the match of the authentication code with the product code to the consumer, and wherein each authentication code may only be utilized once for authenticating said product.